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INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT 1. Statements of Manuel JIMENEZ Fernandez
2. Interview with Indalecio PRIETO

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SUPPLEMENT TO
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1. The Seville Christian Democrat Manuel JIMENEZ Fernandez sent word to Indalecio PRIETO about mid-March 1950 that he was much more optimistic about the possibility of replacing General FRANCO than he had been six months before. French travelers returning from Spain relayed to the Socialist leader JIMENEZ Fernandez' admonition that preparations should be made for any sudden contingency.
2. JIMENEZ Fernandez stated that he would always be a republican. He said that he had told his Monarchist contacts that if the Monarchy were to be installed through an agreement with FRANCO, he would fight it, but that if it came to power through a plebiscite, he would exact only two conditions: that there be freedom of the press and that a Democratic-Christian minority be permitted to function in the parliament with freedom to criticize and to initiate legislation.
3. JIMENEZ Fernandez reportedly asserted that the Socialist Party has great prestige because of the humanitarian and liberal principles for which PRIETO stands, and is influential not only with the Socialist working class but also among laborers whom he classified as Catholic.
4. The most difficult mission of the government which succeeds FRANCO, in JIMENEZ Fernandez' opinion, will be to exact just retribution for crimes and abuses, especially for those which occurred in the post-Civil War period. He believes that strict justice must be modified for the sake of keeping the people calm, and that a Christian Democrat rather than a Socialist should be charged with the punishment of pro-FRANCO elements. Such a person should be prepared to sacrifice his political future to this thankless task. JIMENEZ Fernandez himself offered to make the sacrifice.
5. PRIETO, commenting that through intermittent indirect contacts with JIMENEZ Fernandez he was aware of the latter's position, stated that while he himself did not believe that crimes should go unpunished, he favored a generous policy toward former enemies. He felt that it would be wise for the courts to postpone functioning on this matter until passions had had time to subside and the judges had acquired a sense of generosity and responsibility.

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6. It was PRIETO'S opinion that the historic republican forces would disappear from the political scene, leaving as vital factors only the Socialist labor group and the labor group which he called Catholic. He believed that the leader of the second group ought to be JIMENEZ Fernandez. (PRIETO said that it was known in Spain that he, PRIETO, was not a Catholic, and that the Church would exert every effort to keep the Catholic labor group from coming under Socialist control.) The Republic or the Monarchy, whichever eventually should be established, should function on this double labor base. PRIETO advocated a process by stages from military government to military and civilian government, and finally to a civilian government composed of all political groups except Communists and Falangists. Such a government would conduct constituent elections. The Socialist leader said that he feared that a growing disillusionment among the people with regard to the Western powers would leave little desire for democratic formulae and would enable Communism to gain the support of large sections of the laboring class.
7. The Socialist Party received a letter from the American CIO in early March, PRIETO revealed, in which the Socialists were advised to make every effort to avoid any hostility with the Catholic masses in Spain and to try to gain their confidence and sympathy. PRIETO considered the American suggestion important. Socialist leaders subsequently met at PRIETO'S home and Pascual TOMAS, Secretary of the Union General de Trabajadores, was appointed to confer as soon as possible with Cardinal Archbishop SALIEGE of Toulouse. The Socialist leaders, feeling that the Socialist labor masses were not educated to such a move, agreed that the approach should be made quietly and at a high level.
8. PRIETO'S French visitors commented that the obvious poverty of the Spanish people was far more shocking than it had been when they had last visited Spain in October 1949. On the other hand, they reported, the people seemed to be more hopeful for a change of regime. When asked who would replace FRANCO, the people usually replied, "ARANDA." (Major General Antonio ARANDA Mata.) The visitors received the impression that in spite of scant enthusiasm for ARANDA personally, the opinion was widely held that the General was the only person capable of overthrowing FRANCO.

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